



## **Rebuild Iowa Task Force Education Meeting Notes**

Governor Chet Culver  
Lt. Governor Patty Judge, RIO Executive Director

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**October 15, 2008 – 9:30 am – 3:30 pm  
Iowa Department for the Blind – Assembly Room  
524 Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa**

### **Task Force Members**

Mary Champman, Des Moines Area Community College, Des Moines  
Michael Cormack, Cumberland-Anita-Massena School, Massena  
Dale Crozier, MFL MarMac Schools, Monona  
Jim Fausett, Task Force Chair, City of Coralville, Coralville  
Keith Greiner, Iowa College Student Aid Commission, Des Moines  
Samuel Harding, Jefferson-Scranton School Board Jefferson  
Tim Hurley, Task Force Chair, City of Waterloo, Waterloo  
Lisa McGrath, Tanager Place, Cedar Rapids  
Greg Nichols, Iowa Student Loan, West Des Moines  
Patrice Sayre, Iowa Board of Regents, Des Moines  
Becky Schmitz, Iowa General Assembly, Fairfield  
Beverly Wharton, Task Force Chair, Briar Cliff University, Sioux City

### **Resource Group Members**

Sheila Hanson, Child and Family Policy Center, Des Moines  
Todd Hutcheson, Rockwell Collins, Cedar Rapids  
Melissa Jensen, Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids  
Lori Morrissey, Story County Emergency Management, Ames  
David Unick, Sinclair Hille Architects, Des Moines

### **Staff**

Bill Riley, Rebuild Iowa Office  
Gary Schwartz, Rebuild Iowa Office  
Erin Drinnin, SPPG  
Brooke Findley, SPPG  
Jon Rosmann, SPPG

### **Presenters**

Roger Foelske, Iowa Department of Education  
Jeff Geerts, Iowa Department of Economic Development  
Elaine Watkins-Miller, Iowa Department of Education

### **Welcome and Opening Comments**

Task Force Chairs Jim Fausett, Tim Hurley, and Beverly Wharton welcomed the Task Force members, Resource Group members, and observers.

Mayor Fausett called the meeting to order and encouraged the group to think about the vision for Iowa's future, determining what needs to be done for long-term recovery from all of the disasters from the last year and how to leave the state in a better position. He also asked the group to keep in mind that long-term recovery should be seen as ten to twenty years into the future.

Mayor Hurley introduced himself and identified himself as a new Commission member and Education Task Force Chair. He noted that he is the new President of the Iowa League of Cities and inherited the responsibilities as a Commission member through that responsibility. He noted that the product at the end of the day is meant to design strategies for the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission to consider. He also explained that all Task Forces will not submit separate reports, but one report will be completed as a result of the Task Force's work.

Bev Wharton introduced herself and recognized that this particular Task Force has three Chairs, and that they all work very well together. She echoed comments made by Hurley and Fausett in recognizing the importance of the Task Force spending time during this round of meetings to provide ideas and guidance for the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission as they design their 120-day report. She encouraged the group to stay on task throughout the day, as there is a significant amount of information to discuss in the short amount of time allotted for the meeting.

Jon Rosmann outlined the plans for the day and introduced speakers. He introduced himself and opened the floor for introductions. Task Force members, Resource Group members, staff, and observers introduced themselves.

### **Member News and Updates from Around the State**

Rosmann opened the floor to the Task Force and Resource Group members to talk about how items are progressing in education-related issues around the state. It was recognized that there are many good signs to indicate progress for immediate recovery, but that long-term solutions will be more difficult to institute and recognize. It will be important to consider the possible location of K-12 schools as the rebuilding begins.

Task Force members discussed Parkersburg and recognized how much it helped for that community's school to have their own resources through insurance and other fundraising opportunities. However, as recovery progresses, it will be important to think strategically about long-term recovery equally between those communities that have fared better in immediate recovery and those who have had additional barriers.

Keith Greiner shared information about the Iowa Disaster Grants that have been released to assist college students. The grants are designed to mostly serve people already in college. He distributed handouts about the grant program. The first handout described grant distribution by county. The second described distribution by institution. A handout that uses mapping compared to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) claims is currently being developed. Everyone who was provided assistance through the Iowa Disaster Relief Grants was certified by FEMA. The grant program is assisting students in all three Regents institutions, private, community colleges, and non-profit institutions. These grantees may be attending an institution that is not located in an affected area, but may have been affected in their home. One lesson learned from the grantmaking process is that it is important to collaborate with FEMA, which can be challenging, as it is often difficult to work through information sharing concerns. Greiner added that the Commission is aware that there will need to be some adjustments in state laws to have procedures in place for the time of disasters to reallocate financial resources. The average size of the award is \$1,200, with a range from \$700- \$1,400.

There were over 700 applicants and 414 awards made for the Program.

Greg Nichols shared with the Task Force that at Iowa Student Loan Liquidity, one of the key services offered has included providing for a higher number of forbearance applications. One of the lessons learned in the area of education finance includes information that federal law for federal programs allow for students to have a number of options in times of disaster, and the state generally does not have similar options in place. One of the challenges for agencies trying to determine who should receive aid, such as forbearance, is determining who should be eligible for the assistance. To assist in determining this, it would be helpful to know which families were receiving FEMA assistance. Much as in the case of the Disaster Assistance Grant Program, this information is challenging to receive as there are many confidentiality concerns.

Many Task Force members also recognized that regarding school buildings, floodplain mapping should be a significant part of the overall conversation about long-term planning. It is important to also note that siting and mitigation plans for all education buildings effects the overall education enterprises in communities. The importance of pre-disaster certification for all portions of the education enterprise building structure will encourage smarter choices in building siting.

The Task Force discussed the current situation of Taylor School in Cedar Rapids. There were 252 kids that were displaced and they were absorbed by three neighborhood schools. Aside from that one school concern, the city did lose 157 elementary students, 134 middle school students, and a total of 378 students. McGrath stated that many have been enrolled in other districts, and Linn-Mar has picked up many of those students. Some of the flood recovery cost estimates for Cedar Rapids School District are currently available. Tanager Place has taken it upon themselves to visit and work with children who were directly affected by the flood, and are conducting art therapy projects in many Cedar Rapids schools. McGrath stated that there should be more mental health considerations for entire families that have been affected, recognizing that these considerations are a large part of assisting in mitigating future problems.

Rosmann introduced Gary Schwartz and asked him to provide an update on the recovery process representing the Rebuild Iowa Office.

Gary Schwartz, Task Force staff for the Rebuild Iowa Office, noted that the City of Cedar Rapids has been meeting with Congressional representatives, and recently released a plan for recovery that includes an estimate of 15 years for full implementation. Insurance coverage for tornado damage has made the process different for Parkersburg than for those areas that were affected by the flooding. Schwartz distributed the Disaster Assistance Fact Sheet that describes disaster recovery in detail from a state perspective. He recognized that this was one of the worst disasters to hit the state of Iowa and the information provided shows the wide range and coverage of damage throughout the state. Schwartz stated that the Rebuild Iowa Office will continue to act as a coordinating body for all state agencies regarding disaster recovery and assistance.

Rosmann also encouraged the group to direct any questions about the Rebuild Iowa Office to Bill Riley, a representative of the Rebuild Iowa Office.

The group asked if at some point, this infusion of resources from the federal government will cease to exist. Riley stated that federal disaster funds are regularly replenished by Congress and there are always adequate funds to meet the program requirements for the disaster assistance plan. Schwartz added that the Governor Culver will meet with Congressional

representatives and the federal Housing and Urban Development Office (HUD) on a regular basis to try to expedite the process for recovery.

Task Force recognized that there are Iowa residents that are in need of ongoing assistance, but that the state is in a better place than many expected it to be when recovery began. Schwartz added that he believes that Iowa is farther ahead in disaster recovery than other states who have experienced disasters were at this point in the recovery process. Riley added that this disaster, could be best compared to the Grand Forks, North Dakota disaster, and the partnership with the state of Iowa and FEMA is stronger than one typically sees in disasters. Riley added that people must understand that this type of recovery and rebuilding effort takes time. Key factors that have put Iowa ahead in the recovery process include FEMA's quick response and putting a large number of staff on the ground. Iowa's Homeland Security and Emergency Management response was also a great model, especially the way that different state agencies are collaborating.

Rosmann added that this second Task Force meeting is about reacting to what has been suggested so far, what can be done to better position the state in terms of preparedness and mitigation, identifying long-term strategies to recommend to the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission. Fausett added that the Task Force charge includes a longer term focus and the observations are correct, that we have progressed well in recovery, but today's focus needs to be centered on long-term strategies for education.

Drinnin added that the group has an opportunity in this meeting to be able to take a broader look at what it means to be smarter, stronger, and safer.

## **Progress Reports**

### **Rebuild Iowa Office Activities**

Schwartz pointed out the information about state and federal disaster assistance provided in the Disaster Assistance Fact Sheet. Schwartz also referred to a handout shared from the Office of the Governor that details more than \$1.1 billion in assistance for Iowans and described each of the disaster recovery funding streams that make up that amount.

Elaine Watkins-Miller from the Iowa Department of Education distributed a handout and discussed the Department's work in gathering data after the disaster occurred. She reviewed the School District Progress Report. Today, October 15, is the day that Certified Annual Enrollment is due; the current information presented is informal, and the more formal information will be available in the next two weeks. Most school districts that reported interim progress mentioned the importance of planning and the need to be involved in the local community's emergency management planning. The Iowa Department of Education has shared information about how to plan for safe schools and disasters in partnership with the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division in the past. The Iowa Department of Education has been providing information to all Superintendents around the state about a hotline available to discuss mental health issues and provide support for affected families.

Schwartz added that the Aplington-Parkersburg Superintendent reported many lessons learned and great experiences working with FEMA and the insurance companies. The city of Cedar Rapids also indicated the importance of involving school districts in disaster planning. Many of the reporting and school districts noted that hazard mitigation for all types of emergencies should be conducted. Waverly-Shell Rock's enrollment is up, and the reason for that is not known. One of the school buildings is located in a floodplain, and the community is supportive of moving the elementary school, which will require a bond issue. This process of recovery is

expensive, as not all school buildings were covered by insurance. Mayor Hurley added that issues at North Cedar in Cedar Falls and a natural growth in Waverly may account for the growth in the Waverly-Shell Rock School District.

Wharton indicated her appreciation of school districts trying to note differences between disaster-related and already-expected changes. In regard to enrollment declines, concerns were noted regarding the need for students to attend in other districts. She asked for more information about transportation costs, as most districts are experiencing higher transportation costs anyway. Schwartz noted that some districts are experiencing above-normal transportation expenses because they assist other districts in moving students. Riley added that Emergency Management Coordinators in many Iowa counties have had to triage how they spend their resources. The first step was to get people in houses. As of last week, all known required housing needs had been met. McGrath added that many students who are shown to be displaced are not homeless, rather are staying with family, friends, or in temporary housing. This is not to say that families were in an ideal situation, but everyone had a place to stay.

Watkins-Miller also provided an update on early childhood education. The Department of Education does not concentrate on child care, but she described known information in the Cedar Rapids area. She noted that among other anecdotal information, the vast majority of school districts noted the need to prepare and mitigate for future disasters as a major priority. She recognized that many district officials indicated that the way to accomplish this goal is by collaborating with local emergency management personnel. The volunteer preschool program was not reported upon for purposes of this report. The Department of Education has not received any information about changes in the Cedar Rapids Early Childhood Grant program or practices, even though their building was affected. A very important part of that program is cooperation with community partners, which helped in assisting the program in continuing services given the need to locate.

Roger Foelske from the Iowa Department of Education reported that Iowa Valley Community College in Grinnell was affected and sustained over \$100,000 in damage. All community colleges are fully operating, although enrollment has not declined, and some are re-located. The Department hopes that students will know with fall enrollment reports due in late October. Anecdotal reports indicate that there are no issues with enrollment, Kirkwood's enrollment has increased.

Lori Morrissey with Story County Emergency Management distributed a handout and shared information about lessons learned from the disaster. She described an overview of local emergency management, and provided the Story County Emergency Management Office brochure. All counties need to employ at least one Emergency Management Coordinator, some work full time, others part time, and some fulfill many responsibilities in the County. County Emergency Management Coordinators work for the local Emergency Management Commission and are equally responsible for towns and cities of all size within the County. In Iowa Code, School Boards are asked to participate in the work of the Emergency Management Commission at the local level, but are not required to serve on the Commission or attend the quarterly meetings. She noted the importance of having the schools at the table to assist in carrying out the emergency management duties, as many school buildings and transportation fleets are used during a disaster. All hazards are planned for, especially for elected officials and emergency responders.

Morrissey shared that all Emergency Management Agencies are also required by Iowa Code to have a county-wide recovery plan. Each community is required to have mitigation plans for

every single hazard that may occur in that community. Morrissey encouraged all schools to be involved in city and county-wide planning. County Emergency Management Coordinators are responsible for training, mostly with emergency responders, but county personnel will also train schools. Training courses that concentrate on identification of hazards and bringing decision makers together are available for a nominal cost. Emergency Management Coordinators work with planning committees to think through disaster response.

Morrissey stated that it is extremely important to coordinate resources and identify needs. County Emergency Management Agencies would like to have schools be a part of the community planning. Morrissey shared that many emergencies also conduct disaster exercises; a scenario is conducted based on what should be tested, responders conduct an actual drill. This assists in making an actual incident go much smoother. Most jurisdictions are now working on developing mutual aid agreements on a regional basis. The local Emergency Management Coordinator would work to combine resources for city, county, and school districts.

Wharton asked how Story County's school districts worked in partnership in this disaster. Morrissey shared that Roland-Story was affected and they worked closely with the community to recover. There is a template for many of the portions of overall emergency planning that assists in coordinating the cities, counties, and school districts that can all work together in times of disaster. Plans are not hazard-specific. New plans for emergency management will include a focus on emergency response functions, and it is critical that schools be a part of these emergency mitigation and response plans. She encouraged all school districts to get to know their local Emergency Management Coordinator and to plan on how to be a part of the overall emergency management plan. Emergency Management Coordinators are supposed to be a resource for schools, and would appreciate interest in emergency management coordination. Regional Councils of Government (COGs) are involved when possible, but central Iowa counties do not have a COG.

The Task Force discussed the fact that school districts are addressed in the Iowa Code as participants in the local emergency management process, but many higher education institutions are not officially addressed and should also be included. In addition, the Task Force emphasized the need to remove any barriers to institutions of higher learning participating in the Iowa Mutual Aid Compact, as many of them have facilities and other equipment that would be supportive in response and recovery.

Many Task Force members recognized that more resources are necessary for local Emergency Management Coordinators as there is a renewed interest in participating in emergency planning by several agencies. Morrissey also noted that there are some relatively new training programs available to colleges and universities to learn how to better prepare and respond to emergencies. The course is three days in length, and Melissa Jensen (Resource Group member) recognized that she has been through the training and would be available to discuss that training program after the meeting.

It was noted that in the FEMA Public Assistance Manual, education institutions include private and non-profit education institutions. The FEMA definition of accreditation is also different than Iowa and should be kept at the front of people's minds as they continue to think about long-term recovery for education.

Rosmann introduced Jeff Geerts to discuss ideas and concepts centered around sustainable development for future building. Geerts is a Special Projects Manager at the Iowa Department of Economic Development, and worked for many years at the Iowa Department of Natural

Resources. The Iowa Department of Economic Development made a commitment to a concerted effort to integrate sustainable development practices into planning and building. Geerts recognized that it is now time in the Rebuild Iowa Task Force process to think about how educational institutions work to be safer, smarter, and stronger. In long-term recovery planning there is an opportunity to increase wellness, improve land use, develop shared community resources, build for tomorrow's land uses, improve student performance and staff retention, lower operating and maintenance costs, and meet climate change and energy goals and mandates. It is important to remember that school buildings that are being built today may not always be used for a school building.

Geerts described school rating systems and design guidelines that concentrate on integrated design, location, energy, water, materials, indoor environment, and operations and maintenance. He described LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a building performance rating system that covers commercial building and rehabilitation. There is also a LEED rating system for schools, which takes into consideration more of the regional concerns to result in better environmental performance. There are at least two community school buildings in Iowa that are LEED certified and several at the college level. LEED certification requires a third party verification system. The Iowa Green Streets Criteria was developed by the Iowa Department of Economic Development in the summer of 2008 as a standard for building public community buildings in the future.

Geerts described other known resources for energy efficiency and design. ASHRAE, a group concerned with indoor ventilation standards, has energy design guidelines, including one for schools, to assist in design of a school that is based on efficiency. California uses the Collaborative for High Performance Schools standards. North Carolina has also used LEED and designed their own tool to assist in school design standards. Other tools include the National Best Practices Manual for Building High Performance Schools and the Guide for Daylighting Schools.

Geerts shared that in the last legislative session, Senate File 517, which was designed for grayfield and brownfield development, outlined that the state "shall adopt specifying standards and requirement for sustainable design and construction based upon incorporating nationally recognized ratings, certifications, or classification systems, and procedures relating to documentation of compliance." Geerts stated that this will continue to be refined, but the stage has been set for this type of policy to move forward into the future.

Geerts added that the Iowa Department of Economic Development has developed a list of 10 components for designing and siting considerations for sustainable communities. He also shared benefits that include stronger social networks between schools and communities; better availability of sports, arts and other facilities; more community involvement in school activities and young people's learning; new and creative learning environments; financial savings by sharing costs; and improved school security and reduced vandalism. In a school in the Netherlands, five primary schools are housed in the same building along with a daycare center, recreation center, and a café.

Geerts encouraged the group to consider multiple purposes for a building when it is being designed and recognize possible uses. He suggested some criteria from states that have been through the process that encourages mitigation of sprawl, such as not developing in agricultural preservation areas, using as a revitalization area, locating near existing facilities, and planning in conjunction with existing infrastructure such as water, electric, and sewer systems. Geerts

also outlined the top ten strategies for building “smart schools” that encourage biking and walking. These strategies are:

- Strategy #1: *Build smaller schools. Half of all U.S. schools enroll more than 1,000 students.*
- Strategy #2: *Eliminate minimum acreage standards for school sites.*
- Strategy #3: *Locate schools close to the students they serve.*
- Strategy #4: *Preserve and renovate existing neighborhood schools. Funding and other policies often incentivize school districts to build new schools in suburban locations rather than renovate existing schools in older neighborhoods.*
- Strategy #5: *Locate schools on walkable roads. Schools often get located on major thoroughfares that lack pedestrian enhancements.*
- Strategy #6: *Increase “pedestrian route directness” around schools. Suburban cul-de-sac street layouts typically make walking distances longer and force travelers onto high-speed arterial roads.*
- Strategy #7: *Provide sidewalks or crosswalks.*
- Strategy #8: *Upgrade inadequate sidewalks.*
- Strategy #9: *Encourage and support walking and biking to school. For example, adopt Safe Routes to School programs.*
- Strategy #10: *Do not base school siting decisions solely on the desire for massive athletic facilities.*

Geerts described the newly-released Maryland school building criteria in detail, which includes language that encourages building in existing development areas, eliminating sprawl, and using already-developed energy and waste management infrastructure. He also suggested innovative thinking in meeting overall needs for the community through design. He noted the example to attract and retain teachers. Santa Clara School District in California invested \$6 million to build 40 low-rent apartments for new teachers on land occupied by a school that was closed. Geerts said that this strategy can reduce teacher turnover and provide income for the district.

At the request of Task Force members, Geerts described the details of LEED certification and how the certification and practices can be best put to work when collaborating with FEMA. Riley noted that FEMA generally would support rebuilding to the same level as a damaged building was originally designed, unless new standards in for education facilities have been instituted. The Task Force discussed suggesting that sustainable development be required for new construction for educational institutions as a long-term strategy for Iowa. Geerts added that there may be a way to work sustainable planning into hazard mitigation structures and receive mitigation assistance from FEMA. Many members suggested that the Task Force recommend that design elements that would mitigate against future hazards should be considered whether it be for current or future development.

Morrissey added that elementary schools often ask Emergency Management Coordinators to advise on safety standards, especially concerning safe areas during a disaster and as new



schools are designed with more glass, no doors on bathrooms, long hallways, and other strategies that make it more difficult to make safety decisions.

Mayor Hurley said that in Waterloo, some new buildings have been built with geothermal energy. He added that it is important to remember that the building design should not just end at the end of the property line. Task Force members recognized that "going green" can be beneficial, but there are issues that have surfaced when implementing these new technologies. Recognizing these concerns, it is important to be careful when making decisions about building and design, which can sometimes be costly.

The group discussed the need to create a partnership and a new philosophy of integration of education in emergency planning. Members of the Task Force noted that new development and advances in farm tiling have increased the risk of flooding and other hazards. Schwartz asked how school districts handle being a part of multiple counties when completing emergency planning. Morrissey noted that it is extremely important for school officials that could be affected to work closely to prepare to the best of their ability with emergency management officials from all counties in which they are located.

### **Task Force Issues Review**

Rosmann thanked Geerts and the other speakers and moved the discussion to the review of the recommendations of the Task Force Report. He reminded the group that this is a good place to start in the process of moving forward and identifying issues for long-term recovery for education in Iowa.

It was recognized that with the current financial crisis, there will be some legislative pressure to cut budgets. Transportation was agreed upon as a high-level concern, as ways to provide equitable transportation are challenging with many districts covering various areas. Mental health was also noted as a great need that will keep growing. Current structures to assist with these issues were recognized as currently fragmented, and systematic adjustments will need to be a part of the solution. Concerning mitigation, common-sense measures need to be included in the overall plan. The group recognized that there are cross issues that are being addressed over many of the Task Forces. Regarding mental health, disaster case management has been a key area that was developed early in the response process.

Wharton added that it will be important to throw support behind key strategies that may be taken up by other Task Forces, to indicate areas of common interest and concern. The group discussed details of a possible legislative barrier that has been created in terms of building and designing public buildings. Wharton added that speeding up the rebuilding process through public bidding may be consideration. Due to current contesting procedures and other similar allowances, the system of rebuilding and free movement of projects is slowed and may be stopped easily. Wharton also asked for information about property tax records in Cedar Rapids, and if the taxes received were lower than recent years. It was discussed that many issues may arise from having property taxes due at this time. Fausett noted that several businesses in Coralville have re-built and there may be a higher tax base due to the upgrades in structures.

Drinnin began discussion of the 120-day report to the Governor and the goals of the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission. The Commission has a report due to the Governor on November 17th that will advise the Governor on strategies for rebuilding a safer, stronger, and better Iowa. She asked the group to think about a vision for Iowa's future within the scope of education. It will be important to think long term about the state's needs to rebuild safer, smarter, and stronger. She encouraged each member of the Task Force to think about offering specific strategies for

Iowa in the future. The members of the Task Force discussed that this meeting will be an opportunity to move the discussion forward. The continuation of the work of the Task Force through the state Department of Education or the state Board of Education through planning was discussed. They noted that it will be important to plan for new technology that will be available in the future and make the environment conducive to new approaches to learning. The group discussed that many of the items that are shown to be an important part of learning environments, such as openness, natural light, and others, seem counter to safety precautions.

### **Identify Priority Issues for Achieving Long-term Recovery**

Rosmann discussed the morning's recognized issues in education:

- Floodplain mapping/siting for school buildings and educational facilities
- Data collaboration with FEMA
- Disaster planning with Iowa College Student Aid Commission and others
- Pre-disaster certification for access to data and information
- Mental health needs
- School district/education involvement in emergency management planning
- Sustainable building design guidelines including sheltering, safe rooms, and hazard mitigation
- Transportation
- Environmental considerations
- Design and build process
- Wait time for demolition and selling school property
- Property tax assessment

Drinnin divided the recognized issues into four overarching issue areas to identify strategies:

- Financial impact
- Disaster planning
- Information and resource sharing
- Land use and planning

Riley shared information from Johnson County from a newspaper article regarding property tax revenues. From the article, he recognized that tax rates go up quite dramatically if assessed valuation goes down. Fausett reminded the group that the taxes that are currently being collected are on valuations from 2007. Wharton added that it will be important to consider possible loss of property tax revenue as a long-term issue for education.

### **Strategies to Accomplish Long-term Recovery**

Drinnin recognized Wharton's concern and noted that the Task Force could raise this issue as a concern for long-term strategies. Wharton added that property tax modeling was mentioned as an idea at the last Task Force meeting and should not be taken off the table as a possible strategy for garnering information for long-term planning.

Ideas such as a pool of funds available in a time of emergencies for affected communities were discussed. Fausett recognized that a very high percentage of businesses may not still be in business in five years, based on research from areas affected by disaster. He added that generally small businesses and those owned by new Iowans are the most vulnerable to closing post disaster. It was suggested that from the long term perspective, the Task Force may suggest policies be put into place to increase flexibility for educational institutions for situations like the disasters of 2008. Overall, Iowa school districts' construction budgets are in better shape than their operating budgets; some flexibility in that area would be helpful in ensuring

ease in operations during times of need.

The possibility of a budget guarantee for schools for reserve funds to assist in these types of situations was also suggested. An example used was that Cedar Rapids may ask for reserve funding to make up for their unexpected loss of student population unexpectedly. Many Task Force members added that there needs to be a funding mechanism to pay for school systems that have received a negative impact on their per-student state aid. There are mechanisms now for school districts to adjust budgets from local sources; however, in the case of a natural disaster, there might be a funding mechanism that is supported by the entire state. The group discussed the need for a mechanism like this to be available for many years, depending on the level of damage and need.

The Task Force recognized that the school finance formula is very complex and there are some options in place under Chapters 26 and 29C of the Iowa Code for emergencies. The group discussed that many parts of the Iowa Code may need to be revisited and revised to appropriately address the issues that have been raised through the rebuilding process. Much discussion centered on the state's cash reserve, also known as the "Rainy Day Fund." It was recognized that after a disaster, programming is typically affected at a higher level than infrastructure as structural issues are felt immediately, and other programming issues take longer to be identified and resolved.

Rosmann asked if an appropriate response would be the creation of an advisory board that would assist in navigating the nuances of education finance following a disaster. The group agreed, adding that this may require modeling to determine how these issues will affect policy and funding. Wharton reminded the group that the flooding is what is really driving the issues, as it is the type of disaster that will take a very long time for full recovery.

Drinnin discussed that one of the other overarching areas to explore is disaster planning. Wharton suggested that it may be important to require the formal implementation of disaster plans for educational institutions. She highlighted that this requirement would need to be flexible. Schwartz added that schools are required to have a plan but may be lacking coordination with the larger community. Other members added that every school is required to have their own plans, but it is really about how well officials follow plans. An opportunity or requirement for a continuous review of the plans may be appropriate. Some districts may not be dealing with this, which may be the reason to require planning to be more comprehensive and cover all hazards. Other schools may be interested but not have the capacity to complete it. The group discussed the need to have a school official to be a member of the County Emergency Management Commissions.

Mayor Hurley recognized that no matter what the disaster is, there needs to be sharing, encouragement, and enablement to get school districts and other community leaders together and communicating to prepare for any type of emergency. Drinnin asked if it would be helpful for local education officials to be involved in community planning, and to ensure schools are assisted in designing the best plan for their needs. The group discussed how important it would be to make sure that if a requirement is put into place to have the school representatives (which would include the local school districts, area education agencies, community colleges, and others) be a part of the Emergency Management Commission, that they were participative. Others discussed that the Department of Education could provide some assistance by requiring appropriate attendance at Emergency Management Commission meetings.

Rosmann asked the Task Force if they would like to consider adding policy and authority to

educational institutions in times of disaster for planning, as had been discussed earlier in the day. The example given is that state law does not address exceptions for disasters as often as federal law addresses these and allows for relaxation of requirements. The group agreed that this is an important long-term strategy.

Drinnin asked if there were overall suggestions and strategies under the area of resource and information sharing. Many recognized the need to share information, especially for education stakeholders, about the Iowa Mutual Aid Compact and encouragement to join and be involved. This could be conducted through an annual conference or overall information sharing.

Task Force members recognized that it is important to create an effective design mechanism that ensures emergency management and disaster planning is incorporated in to educational institutions and practices. The overall need to suggest a high priority strategy for review and enhancement of all hazards emergency planning and mitigation was discussed. Also, Task Force members noted that local and regional disaster planning authorities and various organizations that convene on education should include education and outreach components on emergency management issues as part of their discussion and education curricula.

As many of the information sharing capacities are not fully developed between the state and federal government, there is recognition that there needs to be a pre-arranged data sharing agreement in place with FEMA. With these arrangements in place, it will be much easier to start to gather information early in a disaster, and it has been shown that much more can be accomplished to assist people. The Task Force discussed the importance of putting mechanisms into place to identify and address people's mental health issues. Teachers are not trained to recognize the needs of affected children's recovery and there needs to be collaboration with mental health providers from around the state, especially those administered at a community level. The utilization and coordination of state and community resources for mental health needs and recovery was also suggested as a long-term strategy. There is a very fragmented system, and the coordination of services maybe even more important than creation of new services.

Schools were recognized as a major part of the recovery process, as they come into contact with a large portion of the population, and they are often the largest employer in a community.

Rosmann asked the group to spend some time discussing land use and planning. Wharton started by noting that the absolute foundation for land use planning for education and many other interests is updating floodplain mapping around the state. Others also cited the importance of being creative in relocating buildings, ways to collaborate within their own facilities and finding opportunities for multi-use facilities. Incentives to engage communities in designing facilities and employing more efficient practices may need to be employed.

It was agreed upon by Task Force members that the development of financial incentives for multi-use and green facilities is a key strategy in long-term education recovery planning. Many issues that currently exist will only be exacerbated by disasters and should be taken into consideration. It was also discussed that any building standards that have an impact upon the schools should consider the recent disasters in their design. New sustainable design and construction standards should incorporate hazard mitigation and disaster planning. If the state does have some type of construction standards in place, FEMA will be required to provide funding to re-build up to those standards. Since Iowa does not have those standards for schools, many affected districts are experiencing difficulties in dealing with rebuilding efforts. Another issue is that there is a concern of time spent on rebuilding in order to serve students,

and this may mean that there is not time to explore new opportunities for building and design. The group discussed the opportunities to include mitigation planning into new construction through separate FEMA mitigation grants.

A Task Force member recognized that if you have uniform construction standards for all schools, it would take the guesswork out of the planning for rebuilding and relocating. School leaders are not architects, and they work closely with construction professionals when making these decisions, especially on tight timelines. The building codes differ tremendously from state to state, and many other states have more standards in place than Iowa. Many Task Force members recognized that standards would create an opportunity to improve schools, have classrooms that meet accreditation requirements, and create facilities that work better for students when rebuilding after a disaster: rebuilding Iowa schools safer, smarter, and stronger. Some members expressed uncertainty of the necessity of putting standards into place. Rather than standards, an alternative to encourage change may be to put new educational guidelines in place. The group agreed that these new guidelines would include not locating in a floodplain and constructing safe rooms. The group recognized the need to align with FEMA guidelines.

The Task Force discussed that flood insurance was a major part of the discussion in the first meeting and should also be addressed at this meeting. Schwartz shared that the Department of Education has been investigating flood insurance requirements for educational institutions around the state and more research is currently being conducted. Riley clarified that there are two types of flood insurance, one through the federally supported NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program) and also through private insurance carriers that will cover replacement costs. As these are largely public resources, it would be important to recognize that there is a need to have each area assess its insurability and concerns. Task Force members recognized that if the state was going to undertake a feasibility study on these issues, that EMC insurance should be presented an opportunity to study and report on these issues.

Schwartz asked the group if there was an interest in suggesting changes to Iowa Code to allow for expediting the procurement process in the case of a natural disaster. Task Force members agreed that the suggestion was an appropriate long-term strategy.

#### **Vision for Recovery: Task Force Role**

Drinnin provided information about the future stage of the work of the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission and how the Task Force's work today and strategies will be incorporated first into a combined Task Force Report that will be presented to the Commission. The individual Task Forces will not review and comment on the combined Task Force Report. All information will be posted through the Rebuild Iowa Office website.

Mayor Hurley thanked the group for committing their time and effort to the work of the Education Task Force. He also noted that the Iowa Library of Congress provides assistance with books and computers if they have been lost in a disaster. He encouraged the group to contact Congressman Braley's office for more information.

The meeting adjourned at 2:44 pm.